



Walkable Community Project
COOPER LANDING

P.O. Box 863 Cooper Landing, AK 99572
walkcooperlanding.org

MINUTES

JANUARY 14, 2021

7:00 PM

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic and CDC guidelines, the meeting will be held through Zoom. To join the meeting from a computer or device with the Zoom app installed click:

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1. CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 p.m.
2. ROLL CALL: David Story, Chair, Chris Degernes, Treasurer, Janette Cadieux, Secretary
 - a. Others: Krissy Route, Yvette Galbraith, Gary Galbraith, Martha Story, Jonathan Tymick, Lorraine Temple, Michael Link, Mike Amos, Brad Melocik, Dan Adelman, Randal Buckendorf,
3. REVIEW OF MINUTES: Verbally by D Story
 - a. Last committee meeting 12/05/19
 - b. Officers meeting with CLCC board 11/10/20
4. TREASURERS REPORT: \$2234.70 total in account including \$1K from DOWL and expenditure for new electric chainsaw. Funds for Trails primarily from Revenue Sharing. All funds for Walkable and Trails now one account but tracked individually including those from Rev Share and others. Receipts must be sent to Chris for any expenditures. Be sure to copy Chris Degernes, committee treasurer, in any email submissions of receipts for reimbursement so Jamie Gonzalez, CLCC Treasurer, knows they are sanctioned by the committee. If you have not previously done this, please contact Chris Degernes first before submitting any receipts for reimbursement. The committee must agree to any expenditures of committee funds.
5. CORRESPONDENCE – See information and announcements section L Temple, none other received.
6. OLD BUSINESS
 - a. Update on projects
 - i. Slaughter Gulch Trailhead: Working group for DOT has included participation from CLWCP/T and CLAPC.
 1. Latest efforts have revealed that “Alternative 2” is the preferred for DOT while KPB Planning preferred Alt #1 furthest west off Langille Rd.
 2. CLAPC and CLWCP representatives indicated either Alt 1 or 2 would work but Alt 2 was simplest. Alt 3 didn’t seem practical as it crossed the creek and traveled eastward and returned, crossed the creek again before joining the existing trail. See supplementary documents at CLAPC webpage. Alt 2 is closest to the existing trail originating from Stetson Cir. trailhead.

3. J Tymick indicated Alt 2 will be submitted to the KPB PC so this will come before CLAPC for a vote.
- ii. Separated Pathway:
 1. Updates on the pathway from MP 45-47 see MP 47 pinch point in What Grants to Submit section below.
 2. Along the new MP 45-57 alignment there is a proposal to create a separated, paved bike/ped path as a means to meet community needs while dealing with excess material from the hwy project. J
 - a. Tymick indicated there has been some resistance to the pathway from wildlife advocates due to widening the underpasses for wildlife and from Res Pass Trail advocates who are concerned about its integrity. As of now it is still in the plans.
 - b. M. Link asked about location for a proposed parking area for Slaughter Gulch Trail, north or south side hwy?
 - i. Tymick indicated it was proposed for the south side of the highway off Langille Rd. It does not appear to be larger than 3-4 cars at present. It may first be used as a firewood staging area. R Buckendorf indicated some firewood cutters have been up there till 2 a.m.
 - c. M Link asked that they consider how that parking area and a potential trailhead would be for overflow parking on residents along Langille Rd. He is willing to help in development of the Stetson Circle trailhead. He is very concerned about the pressure on the Slaughter Gulch Trail.
 - d. See support doc with drawings. See further discussion under What Grants to Write.
- iii. Grooming: Thank you to volunteers!

7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Trails / Walkable Committee Merger: Was voted on at last CLCC meeting. They are now one committee of the Community Club and report to CLCC.
 - i. Mission: Connecting wild places and peaceful spaces. See also Vision statement on website walkcooperlanding.org. We're trying to be clear amongst ourselves and our partners, what we are about and what our direction is. The Mission and Vision for Walkable group will become the same for Trails as they are inclusive. Before the joining, Trails Committee had become primarily focused on winter trail use/grooming for skiing. That may expand now if volunteers are available.
- ii. Name, logo, etc.
 1. Name:
 - a. Since the joining of the committees, the group name has been defaulted to Cooper Landing Walkable Community Project and Trails Committee and that has been abbreviated in writing to Walkable/Trails Committee.
 - b. C Degernes suggested name be changed to "Cooper Landing Trails and Walkable Community Project."
 - c. D Story further suggested a shortening to just "Cooper Landing Trails" with the Walkable Community Project as well as the Cooper Landing Nordic Ski Club grooming project existing under that overarching name.
 - d. It is important to retain in some way the CL Walkable Community Project name because it is known and it is part of the Kenai Peninsula Borough Transportation Plan. It has been our organizing structure. See document on walkcooperlanding.org website.
 - e. Vote: Y Galbraith suggests we vote prior to grant apps. It was agreed we will vote at CLCC meeting next week.

2. Question by L Temple asked if neighborhood trails are still on the radar and part of the plan?
 - a. D Story answered yes and referred folks to the guiding document available for viewing on walkcooperlanding.org website.
 3. Walkable part of the effort is for getting place to place. Trails is more specific to recreation.
 4. To know what we need to do to care for trails, we need to understand partners and monies available to help make things happen. See grants section below.
 5. The things to pursue may be those that are most impacted by the MP 45-60 Project. If we submitted a large grant the contractor involved with MP 45-60 hwy project would not automatically be able to work on our project.
 6. Question L Temple, Do partners provide funding?
 - a. D Story it varies from agency to agency and project to project.
 7. Logo: We have a new logo already adopted. It hasn't been applied to our website and stationery yet.
- iii. Websites and social media: deferred discussion to next meeting.
 1. We do need help if folks have expertise in social media sites. We may need to expand upon the Trails area.
 2. The Walkable website is being maintained but will need to adopt new naming once that is decided.
 3. There is lots of information on the Walkable website and folks are encouraged to read it.
 4. The grooming website is also active and should adopt new naming once decided.
- b. Grant Opportunities
- i. Because of the MP 45-60 hwy project we have the impetus to look at the issues that will arise with trails and connectivity within our community, e.g. Slaughter Gulch trail.
 1. It is on USFS lands primarily but the trailhead is on KPB land. Monies are not largely available to address that directly by either land manager.
 2. They seek partners, specifically us, to bring the trailhead up to needs level and stabilize the trail for the increased traffic it's receiving. Examination of whether to submit and for what projects and to which grant sources.
 - ii. Grant Sources
 1. **KMTA** (Kenai Mountains Turnagain Arm Heritage Corridor) <https://kmtacorridor.org/grant-guidelines/> Jan 20 webinar, due Mar 12, up to \$24,500, 10% match, must pay for it yourselves up front and submit for reimbursement. We'd have to check with KMTA if one entity, CLCC, can have two apps since Youth Grp already has one.
 2. **FLAP** (Federal Lands Access Program) <https://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/flap/ak/> Jan 28, webinar, Mar 26 closing. Large dollars. Access to federal lands is the key. Must have partners. May have match waved due to safety mitigation nature of the project. Must have an administrator like a gov body, agency, or DOT itself.
 3. **Others** include **ATAP**- Alaska Transportation Alternative Program (info recv'd has found lack of follow-up on these for other projects outside ours), **RTP** Recreational Trails Program limited to \$100,000 so not for a large project, **NWSA** National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance may be a source for Slaughter Gulch Trail/Trailhead project and partner with Alaska Trails.org. Any work on USFS lands must be permitted by USFS.
 - iii. What Grant(s) to Submit?
 1. Rehab the **Safety Path** MP 47-51. If we submit for this we must have MOA with DOT to recognize the Safety Path and have "site control". B Melocik is a

believer in rehabbing the core part of the Safety Path through town to help folks move within the community. The community has grown/changed and warrants attention. We would need an MOA with DOT for “site control” prior to any grant application.

2. **MP 51.5-57** (Cooper Creek Bridge to Sportsman’s Landing) since we do not have a historical trail to work from we would have to do an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) and that would be both costly and time consuming even if staying within DOT right of way (ROW).
3. **Cooper Creek Bridge:** We have a preliminary design for this structure. Safety is a big concern with its current status since you must walk inside the guardrails with no true space. It may be the narrowest and certainly is one of the oldest bridges on the Sterling Hwy. It is a limiting pinch point for the overall Walkable Community effort.
4. **Slaughter Gulch** Trail and Trailhead improvement. There is no KPB or DOT plan of improvement for the Stetson Circle trailhead. At peak use, it is likely we could not accommodate as many cars as may wish to park there. Folks may be directed to park at the school if parking at Stetson Cir. is full. The existence of the trail is now much more broadly known. B Melocik noted signage would be helpful along the route to guide behavior. General discussion of concept of a Langille Rd overflow parking area was:
 - a. Negative for its impacts on the neighborhood,
 - b. Likelihood of problems for folks dashing across the hwy at that point rather than hike down to the underpass,
 - c. Creation of a social trail on the mountainside, and
 - d. Desire to focus on Stetson Circle as the main trailhead.
5. **MP 47 pinch point** due to the rock face.
 - a. D Story asked J Tymick to comment on the MP 47 pinch point in the Safety Path between the new section being built and the old section through town. JT answered that the main section of the MP 45-47 separated pathway has been designed but it hasn’t even been modeled as it approaches MP 47 due to space restrictions that must be addressed. The pinch point could still be looked at, perhaps towards the end of the hwy project. It is outside project limits but if it is more of a maintenance project, it is more easily accomplished. B Melocik indicated a rock hammer may be used to widen the space and re-establish a safe slope so it’s more of a maintenance issue than a rock blasting one. This may not need grant funds to accomplish.
6. **Signage for MP 45-47** new separated bike/ped pathway. This will be handled in part by the hwy project itself but not perhaps identifiable and unique to our community. We have designs for system-wide signs that have been developed in previous grant projects and may be applied here.

iv. Impacts to our choices

1. Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan rewrite is due now. It is part of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. LWCF is tied to wetlands. LWCF dollars are 1:1 match from feds to state. It would allow agencies like USFS to access other dollars they would not otherwise have access to. This could benefit groups such as ours.
 - a. David will likely ask you to submit comments in support of budgeting for this at the state level.
 - b. B Melocik indicated some of the federal agencies like USFWS or USFS will have monies from LWCF that are now reliably available in the

coming years as part of the Great American Lands Act. State of AK must budget for the matching funds.

2. KPB assistance from Planning/Land Management but not financial support.
 - a. Brenda Ahlberg, grant writer in mayor's office has agreed to help with a grant submission. She recommends FLAP. She recommends reaching for the easiest part of the project first. (We have long had this type of approach.)
 3. Support from State Parks (and others) is there, again not financial. Jack Blackwell agreed to advocate including attending meetings on a grant app.
 4. We should not consider the fact that the highway project is in progress to be an asset or a reason to write a grant now. Bids must be put out so the fact that a contractor is already here doesn't impact the likelihood that the grant will be awarded.
 5. C Degernes reminded all that a FLAP grant would have to be administered by one of the agencies or KPB government.
- c. Survey: We don't have survey results but we can work through CLCC to gather input. Let's think about what will benefit the community at large the most? C Degernes asked folks to focus on what will help our community the most.
- d. Volunteer Opportunities: Please email walkcooperlanding@gmail.com to volunteer
 - i. Trail Maintenance:
 1. M Link offered help on Sltr Glch trailhead
 2. We own tools for trail maintenance.
 3. We have bent over alders on some of our ski trails that could use some cutting.
 - ii. Grooming ski trails
 1. Need help with brushing
 2. Need on-call help for loading/unloading equipment when we move back and forth between trailheads, especially helpful at Devil's Crk area
 3. Groomers will need some training including helping with grunt work to learn how to move the equipment but importantly to do the job hazard orientation as required by USFS (our groomed trails are on USFS lands). Please contact David for this.
 - iii. Media / Communication
 1. CL Trail Run was virtual in 2020. No plan yet for 2021. Virtual likely due to pandemic.
 2. Let us know if you're good at Media and Communication management. It's important to keep information fresh especially on social media.
 3. There are several hiking Facebook pages for Cooper Landing. Many people have asked to join. Can we consolidate those so we can unify information going out to the public? Yvette Galbraith agreed to help consolidate Facebook hiking pages.
 - iv. Grant Application/Administration
 1. If we choose to submit a grant we'll need some help writing the application. See KPB above.
 - v. Bean Creek trail needs some attention and maintenance like grass cutting and brushing.
8. INFORMATION and ANNOUNCEMENTS
 - a. Lorraine Temple – Update on trail safety proposals
 - i. Federal Subsistence Management Board regulation change proposals due end of February.
 - ii. Board of Game regulation change proposals due May 1st at this time, but that may change to a later date due to COVID19 delaying proper meetings.

- iii. Seems like the best idea at this point is to "dust off" the proposal that had so much work put into it, tweak it and re-submit. Input from trail concerned community members is needed.
 - iv. I'm meeting with Francisco Sanchez to discuss what role the Forest Service can or will play in facilitating safer trails. I'll include discussion of the underpasses that will "funnel" wildlife under the new alignment and the desire to regulate trapping in those areas as well.
 - v. **Zoom Meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 19th at 10:00am.** I'll post a link to the meeting on Facebook Cooper Landing announcements and in the Crier. Also, I can be contacted at 907-299-2855. I'm happy to supply both the federal and BOG proposals from 2015-16 to anybody prior to the meeting for them to look over.
9. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS –
- a. Y Galbraith- There are several hiking Facebook pages for Cooper Landing. Many people have asked to join. Can we consolidate those so we can unify information going out to the public? Yvette will help in this consolidation effort.
 - b. C Degernes- We should focus our presentation at the CLCC meeting. D Story feels we should vote upon the name alternatives as mentioned tonight. We should zero in on the MP 47-51 as a potential grant project. Cooper Creek Bridge and Slaughter Gulch Trailhead and Trail are areas to pursue. We can work on details of partners, etc once choices are made.
10. SELECT NEW MEETING DATE:
- a. Schedule: One week prior to each Community Club meeting throughout the year.
 - b. Next meeting Mar. 18, 2021 6:00 p.m.
11. ADJOURNMENT: 9:11 p.m.

For information or to submit comments, please email walkcooperlanding@gmail.com